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ART. VII.—*Battle of Niagara, a poem without notes, and Goldau, or the Maniac Harper.* 1 vol. 12mo. pp. 143. Baltimore. N. G. Maxwell, 1818.

THIS volume is small, has good parts, gives promise of still better things, and yet is fatiguing. We shall begin with what appear to be its defects.—From the title page, we thought that these must be narrative poems, but they consist chiefly of description; and this is of a singular character, as it is rather telling what things are like, than what they are. And where a man has but an indistinct perception of what should be the prominent object, and introduces a string of similitudes for illustration, they generally become substitutes instead of auxiliaries,—a remark which is perfectly verified in the present work, where few distinct pictures are received from the description, but the fancy is perpetually drawn off and, for a time, amused by sparkling collateral beauties, to the almost entire desertion of the matter in hand. There is more brilliancy than there are objects to shine upon.—In the next place, a visionary, uncertain character is given to every thing,—to waters, shores, woods and hills, to men and their concerns, but with nothing of considerable value in place of the simple reality. There is strange music every where, whether of the air or earth, whether in the ear or fancy, it is not easy to determine. One knows not whether he is to regard himself as upon the ground or in the skies. This is not meant for praise, and as a proof of the author's power,—for he creates no illusion, but only an unfortunate doubt as to his purpose; he does not transport us beyond the world, but only confounds us by his mysterious representations of it. If he merely meant to show how a poetical spirit, in the contemplation of God's works, hears sounds that seem not earthly, and communicates to every object, forms, characters and uses, borrowed wholly from the imagination and suited to its own aspirations, his theory would not be questioned by any man of feeling who had lived long in the presence of nature;—but he does not appear to write from his experience of all this, nor to address our sympathies;—when he makes things cloudy and spiritual, and gives them secret virtues and powers, he is too often conjecturing, instead of feeling what he says.—Then, his poetry is of a singularly evasive cast. He eludes his subject whenever

it comes to him in any definite shape,—he is not willing to have a certain topic. Besides this, we often find ourselves on the brink of something extraordinary,—it may be of something very fine,—and yet fail of it, and thus great injustice, we believe, is done to the author's conceptions, and certainly to our expectations.—Once more, there is a prevailing unwillingness to call things by their own or indeed by any names. The men and women (four or five glorious and shadowy beings) are always spoken of with affected emphasis and parade—‘*that youthful rider,*’—‘*that wild one,*’—‘*that young mother,*’—‘*the brown-cheeked youth,*’—and he, whose ‘*brow was always bare,*’ &c. This is not the way to make us acquainted with them, or much interested in their fortunes. For readers of this world, they should be more tangible, more accessible and defined, with less of glare at one time and dimness at another. A little more plain humanity and earthly scenery would have been of incalculable service to the book. But the armies are as indistinct and nameless as the individuals,—they are generally indicated by their banners; ‘*the red-cross flings a radiant challenge to its starry foe,*’ and ‘*the eagle breed flap over the star troops,*’—and sometimes, even these faint designations are wholly omitted. After all,—“on, on, you noble English,”—could not be improved by the daintiest circumlocution in the language.

There are signs of poverty in the frequent recurrence of the same expressions, combinations, and we may almost say of whole passages. The author has selected a few favourites and loves to exhibit them every where. Objects appear in nearly the same light. Similitudes are poured upon us with almost eastern prodigality, but they are very closely allied. They are, indeed, enumerated with some rapidity,—the author might even have persuaded himself that he was kindled by new and crowding fancies;—but we miss that natural sprightliness which shews that the mind is at play rather than at work; more intent upon uttering thoughts than finding them; delighted with observing the natural relations of things rather than forcing them into artificial ones.—The book is much too uniform in its tone. The author seems to have resolved poetry into swell and dignity of verse, a strained and unusual way of telling every thing, a whimsical and often inscrutable refinement upon what is most common and entirely depending for its effect upon the perfect simplicity with which it is presented.

The author avows that his object, in the first poem, was ‘to do justice to American scenery, and American character; not to versify the minutæ of battles—not to give names, titles, or geographical references for his authority, for all these may be found in the *newspapers* of the day.’ So the subject was too fresh and vulgar to be treated with plainness and particularity,—it would not bear out the poet, but needed to be sustained and countenanced and set off to advantage by him. For our parts, we are much better satisfied with the subject than the treatment. What justice is here done to American character, when, more than half the time, one is in doubt whether the persons are his countrymen or the enemy; and when the only distinction between them is in their banners or feathers, in something outward, and not the least in feeling or character?—As for American scenery, it is sufficiently various, magnificent and peculiar to inspire poetry, and bear honest, unaffected description; and none of our bards will do it justice, till they are willing to paint it as it is. It will not do to talk of it in general terms, and apply to it merely grand and swelling phrases, the common-places of poetry, which may be found every where, which always sound well, and now and then may be appropriate. Such is the favourite language of men whose poetical conceptions are merely conjectural, who undertake to describe what they never saw, to put words in order, rather than things. They ‘never go to particulars, but stick to generals, and are safe,’—remembering Mr. Falconer’s excellent advice to the ignorant.—Could the author, in his long and eloquent appeals to the Ontario, suppose that he was making any one better acquainted with that lake? He expresses, no doubt, many feelings which the scene would call up,—a wish that it might be ever dark and wild and free, that art might never intrude upon nature, and that the lake’s rude children, (if we can make out the meaning of a strangely mixed passage,) should be always unsubdued, always possessed of their native vigour. There are indeed poetical combinations, and passages that have beauty; but American scenery is no more familiar, no more our own, by having a better place in our imagination and affections, than it was before.

If the author had only proposed to himself something definite, and used a less pretending and fallacious, but more significant phraseology,—if he had written more from impulse

and personal notice of things, and appealed more directly to our experience and sympathy,—if he would not mistake vagueness for grandeur, and venture every thing which sounds violent or strange,—his good parts would appear less accidental, and his failures less alarming. It is but fair to say, that with much effort there is here some strength, and in the midst of show there are yet simple beauties ;—still, these and the defects are so generally in company, that we can scarcely make extracts on the author's account, without doing some justice at the same time to ourselves. We cannot undertake to decide what he might accomplish, if he were to abandon affectation entirely and an imitation of two or three modern poets, of very unequal merit, indeed, but equally popular and dangerous as examples :—and, probably, his pretensions are not so humble, as to make him very solicitous about the rank he is to hold among American bards. So, all that remains is to give some passages, which we shall take from both poems without much regard to the order in which they stand, for their apparent or avowed subjects are the least important things in them, and would baffle any attempt at a narrative detail. They are devoted to things in general, such as an ambitious fancy easily accumulates, when a regard to facts or plan is wholly out of the question, and when the writer is persuaded that the fainter the analogy, the greater, of course, must be his own ingenuity and nicety of perception.

We begin with the visit of a warrior to his family. He had withdrawn from the camp by night, and after a dim adventure, he reaches a cottage. What follows is the only description here of a domestic kind,—it has unusual distinctness and particularity, and is the most refreshing passage in the book. We have prepared the reader for any unfortunate mixture he may find even in the best parts, and he must follow his own taste in selecting what is good. We have often wished to give some single lines or combinations, which were worth more, perhaps, than any passage we shall extract ; but we thought they might suffer a little by their separation even from what was inferior.

‘ Beneath its venerable vault he stands :
And one might think, who saw his out-stretched hands,
That something more than soldiers e’er may feel,
Had touched him with its holy, calm appeal :

That yonder wave—the heaven—the earth—the air
 Had called upon his spirit for her prayer.
 His eye goes dimly o'er the midnight scene :
 'The oak—the cot—the wood—the faded green—
 The moon—the sky—the distant moving light—
 All !—all are gathering on his dampened sight.
 His warrior-helm and plume, his fresh-dyed blade
 Beneath a window, on the turf are laid ;
 The panes are ruddy thro' the clambering vines
 And blushing leaves, that Summer intertwines :
 In warmer tints than e'er luxuriant Spring,
 O'er flower-embosomed roof led wandering.
 His pulses quicken—for a rude old door
 Is opened by the wind : he sees the floor
 Strewed with white sand, on which he used to trace
 His boyhood's battles—and assign a place
 To charging hosts—and give the Indian yell—
 And shout to hear his hoary grandsire tell,
 How he had fought with savages, whose breath
 He felt upon his cheek like mildew till his death.

'*Hark !—that sweet song !—how full of tenderness !
 O, who would breathe in this voluptuous press
 Of lulling thoughts !—so soothing and so low ;
 Like singing fountains in their faintest flow—
 It is as if some holy—lovely thing,
 Within our very hearts were murmuring.
 The soldier listens, and his hands are prest
 In thankfulness, and trembling on his breast :
 Now—on the very window where he stands
 Are seen a clambering infant's rosy hands.*' pp. 51, 52.

He enters and meets his wife with her infant.

'*His glorious boy—springs freshly from its sleep ;
 Shakes his thin sun-curls, while his eye-beams leap,
 As half in fear—along the stranger's dress—
 Then—half advancing yields to his caress :
 Then—peers beneath his locks, and seeks his eye
 With the clear look of careless infancy.*' p. 53.

The description in the opening of the third and fourth cantos is too long to be inserted entire. It has some new and strong lines, with much display and generality. Some parts are mystical or unmeaning, and some are delicate even to feebleness. The passage throughout is sufficiently charac-

teristic. We shall take only a few parts, and in them are the thoughts we like most.

‘ ’Tis dark abroad. The majesty of Night
Bows down superbly from her utmost height :
Stretches her starless plumes across the world ;
And all the banners of the winds are furled.
How heavily we breathe amid such gloom !
As if we slumbered in creation’s tomb.
It is the noon of that tremendous hour,
When life is helpless, and the dead have power :
When solitudes are peopled : when the sky
Is swept by shady wings that sailing by
Proclaim their watch is set : when hidden rills
Are chirping on their course ; and all the hills
Are bright with armour :—when the starry vests
And glittering plumes, and fiery twinkling crests
Of moon-light sentinels, are sparkling round,
And all the air is one rich floating sound :
When countless voices, in the day unheard,
Are piping from their haunts : and every bird
That loves the leafy wood, and blooming bower,
And echoing cave, is singing to her flower :
When every lovely—every lonely place,
Is ringing to the light and sandaled pace
Of twinkling feet ; and all about, the flow
Of new born fountains murmuring as they go :
When watery tunes are richest—and the call,
Of wandering streamlets, as they part and fall
In foaming melody, is all around.’ pp. 59, 60.

‘ It is that hour of quiet extacy,
When every rustling wind, that passes by
The sleeping leaf, makes busiest minstrelsy :
When all at once ! amid the quivering shade,
Millions of diamond sparklers, are betrayed !
When dry leaves rustle, and the whistling song
Of keen-tuned grass, comes piercingly along ;
When e’en the foliage on the glittering steep,
Of feathery bloom—is whispering in its sleep.’ p. 61.

‘ And now the daylight comes!—slowly it rides,
In ridgy lustre o’er the cloudy tides,
Like the soft foam upon the billow’s breast ;
Or feathery light upon a shadowy crest ;
The morning breezes from their slumbers wake,
And o’er the distant hill-tops, cheerly shake

Their dewy locks, and plume themselves, and poise
 Their rosy wings, and listen to the noise
 Of echoes wandering from the world below :
 The distant lake, rejoicing in its flow :
 The bugles ready cry : the labouring drum :
 The neigh of steeds—and the incessant hum
 That the bright tenants of the forest send :
 The sun-rise gun : the heave—the wave—and bend
 Of everlasting trees, whose busy leaves
 Rustle their song of praise, while Ruin weaves
 A robe of verdure for their yielding bark ;
 While mossy garlands—rich—and full—and dark,
 Creep slowly round them.’ pp. 62, 63.

‘ Fresher and fresher comes the air. The blue
 Of yonder high pavilion swims in dew.
 The boundless hum that sunset waked in glee,
 Hath died away. A deep outspreading hush
 Is on the air. The heavy, watery rush
 Of far off lake-tides, and the weighty roll
 Of tumbling deeps, that fall upon the soul
 Like the strong lulling of the ocean wave
 In dying thunder o’er the sailor’s grave.’ p. 75.

We have spoken of the author’s constant use of similitudes, and we shall give a passage,—describing a soldier’s funeral by way of illustrating something else,—to shew how much he prefers what should be the subordinate thought to the main one.

‘ The shadows deepen. Now the leaden tramp
 Of stationed sentry—far—and flat—and damp
 Sounds like the measured death-step, when it comes
 With the deep minstrelsy of unstrung drums :
 In heavy pomp—with pauses—o’er the grave
 Where soldiers bury soldiers : where the wave
 Of sable plume—and darkened flags are seen—
 And trailing steeds with funeral lights between :
 And folded arms—and hoding horns—and tread
 Of martial feet descending to the bed,
 Where Glory—Fame—Ambition lie in state.’ p. 76.

Another allusion to the soldier’s funeral is made soon after, which has no advantage over the first, though it is introduced more in the style of direct description. Both are good, have strong expressions, and the merit,—quite rare in this work,—

of suggesting a picture to the mind by the enumeration of striking particulars.

‘In solitude they lie!—with no friend near:
Not stretched in soldier pomp upon the bier,
With the high casque—and crimson plume—and sword:
With blow of trumpets—roll of drums—and word
Of slow command,—and dragging tramp of steeds—
And all the pageantry the dead man needs—
The banner stretching dark, and float of dusky weeds.’ p. 89.

The second poem, *Goldau*, with a little invention and good management, might have been made attractive. The subject was not without fine incident, and there was room for pathos and awful and mild description. Every body remembers that this village,—situated in one of the most delightful valleys in Switzerland,—was, in the autumn of 1806, suddenly overwhelmed by the fall of a large projection of the mountain of *Rossherg*. The poem before us hardly touches upon this event, but is principally occupied with a young maniac harper, who had lost every friend he had upon earth by this calamity. His appearance and state of mind are given in endless and very vague description, as well as the effect of his music upon others,—especially upon a peasant’s child, the only one he communed with, and she ‘a wild and melancholy girl.’ The harper once attempts to say something of his country; but ‘Switzerland of hills!’ and ‘Home of the earthquake!’ are about the length, breadth and substance of his pictures. At the close, he describes the fall of the hill in the following lines,—the language, indeed, fails now and then, but two or three particulars, which may be found in the accounts published at the time, are given with some spirit.

‘But the hour when the sun in his pride went down
While his parting hung rich o’er the world:
While abroad o’er the sky his flush mantle was blown,
And his red-rushing streamers unfurled;—

An everlasting hill was torn
From its eternal base—and borne—
In gold and crimson vapours drest,
To where—a people are at rest!

Slowly it came in its mountain wrath,
And the forests vanished before its path:

And the rude cliffs bowed—and the waters fled—
 And the living were buried, while over their head
 They heard the full march of their foe as he sped,
 And the valley of life—was the tomb of the dead !
 'The mountain sepulchre of all I loved !

The villages sank—and the monarch trees
 Leaned back from the encountering breeze—
 While this tremendous pageant moved !
 'The mountain forsook his perpetual throne—
 Came down from his rock—and his path is shown—
 In barrenness and ruin—where
 The secret of his power lies bare—
 His rocks in nakedness arise :
 His desolations mock the skies.' pp. 142, 143.

'This passage has beauty and feeling—and may prepare
 one for something still better, hereafter, from the mind which
 conceived it. The author is speaking of the maniac.

' His sufferings, and his home unknown ;
 A madman—and a minstrel—thrown
 Upon the barren mountain, goes
 Unharm'd, amid his nature's foes :'
 — ' never yet, there shone the eye,
 Could let him pass unheeded by ;
 And every heart—and every shed,
 Gave welcome to that maniac's tread :
 And peasant-babes would run to cheer
 His footsteps, as he wandered near :
 And every sunny infant eye,
 Grew sunnier as his step came nigh :
 And when he went at night alone,
 Where mighty oaks in fragments strown,
 Proclaimed the revels of the storm—
 He went in safety : o'er his form
 There hung a mute, but strong appeal,
 'That those, who rend the clouds, might feel :
 Unharm'd, upon the cliff he'd stand,
 And see the Thunderer stretch his wand,
 And hear his chariots roll ;
 And clap his hands—and shout for joy !—
 When lightnings wrapped the pole !
 And he would toss his arms on high,
 In greeting as the arrows flew :

And bare his bosom to the sky ;
 And stand with an intrepid eye,
 And gaze upon the clouds that past,
 Uprolling o'er the mountain blast,
 And wonder at their depth of blue :
 Then—wildly toss his arms again,
 As if he saw the rolling main ;
 And heard some ocean-chant anew :
 As if upon each passing cloud,
 He saw the Tempest harping loud
 Amid her fiery-bannered crew.' pp. 109, 110.

The following passages are rather too exquisite. The reader may possibly perceive here some good conceptions ruined by the borrowed affectation of the style. Imitation is almost sure to impair genius, if it does not indicate the entire want of it.

' What holy dreaming comes in nights like these !
 When, like yon wave—unruffled by a breeze,
 The mirrors of the memory all are spread,
 And fanning pinions sail around your head :
 When all that man may love—alive or dead,
 Come murmuring sweet, unutterable things,
 And nestle on his heart with their young wings.' p. 58.

' Where nameless flowers hang fainting on the air,
 As if they breathed their lovely spirits there ;
 Where heaven itself is bluer, and the light
 Is but a coloured fragrance—floating—bright.' p. 53.

We have this again with variations.

' When all the garlands of the precipice,
 Shedding their blossoms, in their moonlight bliss,
 Are floating loosely on the eddying air,
 And breathing out their fragrant spirits there :
 And all their braided tresses in their height,
 Are talking faintly to the evening light. p. 61.

' Such airs as o'er the waters float—
 When symphonies of evening rise
 In whispers to the listening skies—
 And swell and die so soft away
 We think some minstrel of the day
 Is piping on its airy way :
 Or some sweet songstress of the night
 Waves music from her wings in flight :

A lulling—faint—uncertain song—
 That but to spirits can belong :
 To happy spirits too—and none
 But those, who, in the setting sun,
 Expand their thin bright wings, and darting,
 Spin music to their god in parting :
 ‘ Who has not felt when sounds like these,
 Like prayers of lovers on the breeze—
 Came warm and fragrant by her cheek
 Oh, more than mortal e’er may speak !
 As if unto her heart she’d caught
 Some instrument that to her thought,
 Gave answering melody and song,
 In murmurings like an airy tongue :
 And echoing in its insect-din,
 To every pulse and hope within,
 Had set her thoughts to fairy numbers !’ pp. 115, 116.

The maniac here speaks of his harp.

‘ For the night of the heart, and of sorrow is o’er it,
 And the passionate hymn that in other days tore it,
 With her, who so oft to the green bower bore it,
 Have gone like the moonlighted song of a dream !
 Like the soul of an eye that hath shed its last beam !
 And the tendrils of lustre that over it curled,
 With the dark eye that gave all its wanderings birth,
 All gone—like a cherubim-wing that is furled.’ p. 136.

The following passage sounds remarkably well, and is just fitted to deceive a man into the belief that he is saying something. The author is speaking of the maniac and the secret of his calamity ; and, in many of the lines, has contrived to say nothing, with more good language and allusion than we have seen employed in this service for some time.

‘ But those who knew him, knew full well
 That something terrible once fell
 Upon his heart, and froze the source
 Whence comes enthusiasm’s force—
 Something of icy touch that chills
 The heart-drops of our youthful years :
 Something of withering strength that kills
 The flowers, that Genius wets with tears—
 Fetters the fountain in its flow :
 Mildews the blossom in its blow :

And breathes o'er fancy's budding wreath
The clotting damps of early death :
That spreads before the opening light—

The sunshine of the heart—
A cloud that tells of coming night,
And chills the warblers in their flight,
That twinkling gaily to the skies,
With piping throats and diamond eyes,
In unfledged strength depart.

‘ Something—but what was never known :
Something had pressed his pulses down :
Blasted the verdure of his spring :
Shorn the gay plumage of his wing :
Silenced his harp, and stilled his lyre :
Heaped snow upon his bosom's fire—
And caught away the wreath of flame
That hovered o'er his youthful name,
Obscured his sun—and wrapped the throne
Where Glory in her jewels shone,—
Forever from his searching gaze :
And, on his brain, in lightning traced
The suffering of his youthful days :
Where Madness had with clouds erased.
The characters, that Rapture placed
Upon his heart and soul in blaze !’ pp. 105, 106.

If we had room and it were necessary, we might shew at once the author's habit of describing by similitudes and giving a dream-like aspect to things, in a remarkable passage—pp. 19, 20,—beginning with :—

‘ But they speed like coursers whose hoofs are shod,
With a silent shoe from the loosen'd sod !’

The following attempts were not worth failing in.

‘ And lightnings left his eye,’ p. 49.

‘ his flashing eye
And echoed word along his far ranks fly,
With flash and sound as brief as counted musketry !’ p. 77.

‘ With arrows not like his of sport—that go
In light of music from a silver bow.’ p. 32.

‘ And round about a languid cheek are blowing
Rich silkiness and shade.’ p. 70.

‘ That youthful rider, what an awful brow !
How calm and grand ! and now he nods and now,—

Faith 'tis a glorious vision ! how his hair
Is blown about his brow, as if it were
A living ripeness clustering in the air.' p. 63.

We must now warn the author against setting too great a value upon his thoughts.

'When watery melodies find birth.' p. 113.
'And angel melodies find birth.' p. 125.
'And solemn melodies have birth.' p. 129.
'Where the waters of melody flow, love.' p. 135.

with much more of 'watery tunes,' 'silky tunes,' and 'windy tunes and pipes.'

'Mirror of garland-weaving solitude.' p. 27.
'This is the mirror of dim solitude.' p. 40.

Such expressions as these occur too often.

'And her plumes were unfolded abroad o'er the sky.' p. 5.
'While his robe was abroad on the breeze that went by.' p. 6.
'No banners abroad on the wind are thrown.' p. 19.
 'the blazing flight
'Of starry banners are abroad again.' p. 83.
 'with garments blown
'Abroad upon the winds.' p. 87.
'And robe abroad upon the air.' p. 113.
'While the stars are all busy and bright, love.' p. 135.
'And stars are busy there.' p. 42.

This is too much in Leigh Hunt's childish way, when he says—

"There's something at work in the moon-shiny air."
'They pass like thoughts o'er a clear blue eye.' p. 140.
'Land of white bosoms, and blue laughing eyes !
Like miniature pictures of transparent skies,
Where young thoughts like the blessed are seen.' p. 12.

His boats are always aerial.

'Like the enchanted skiff that dreamers see
Self-moved in moonlight breeze.' p. 45.
 'it goes as still and fleet
As that ethereal bark that sails on high
Amid the lustre of a dark blue sky.' p. 51.

‘Now, o’er the waters ye may faintly see
A shadowy something coming silently.’ p. 46.

He borrows largely, and often with a show of originality. The “talking rills” of Hunt, Byron’s “earthquake’s birth,” and a daring but sad imitation of his storm among the Alps, are hardly worth mentioning.

‘Forms, that rock as the waters flow,’ p. 140.

seems to have been suggested by a passage in the *Bride of Abydos*,—

“His head heaves with the heaving billow.” &c.

‘The spirit of departed days.’ p. 126.

This line may be found in two modern poets, with this difference, that one has *hours* instead of *days*.

‘And heaven’s blue arch ring back the sprightly melody.’ p. 41.

In Ogilvie’s hymn, the line runs thus,—

“Till heaven’s broad arch ring back the sound.”

This line has undergone further amelioration in this country.

“Till heaven’s *wide* arch *repeat* the sound.”

The original itself is not very remarkable, but it could not be improved, though it might not be worth borrowing.

‘Like bells upon the wind that come and go again.’ p. 26.

This is expressed with freedom, as if it were original. It was probably suggested by Cowper’s description of the same thing.

The Indian sleeping fearlessly,

‘On jutting cliff—above a tumbling deep,’ p. 29.

just reminds one of Collins’ bold personification of *Danger* ;—

“Or throws him on the ridgy steep
Of some loose hanging rock to sleep.”

‘How like a shade the horse and rider seem!’ p. 25.

Campbell’s verses—

“Now o’er the hills in chase he flits
The hunter and the deer a shade,”—

might have been in the author's mind—and Campbell might have read the 'Dying Indian' of our own poet, Philip Freneau, where are these lines.

"No deer along these gloomy forests stray,
No huntsman there takes pleasure in the chase;
But all are empty, unsubstantial shades,
That ramble through these visionary glades."

It will be perceived, that we have spoken more of the defects than beauties of this work, as if we thought that the former threatened more than the latter promised. The truth is, that the faults of this writer do not appear to be the consequences of an overheated mind, such as work their own cure,—but of a perverted taste, a bad system, a mistaken adoption of other men's peculiarities. Where he has done well, he is mostly indebted, we think, to his own powers. He is one, whom men censure in the hope,—too generally a vain one,—of seeing him grow better. It gives us no small pleasure to cite so many good passages from the work of a native poet, and we trust that the author will not allow this to be our only opportunity.

It will be time enough, by and by, to shew the disadvantages which our poetry may suffer from its growing up under the eye of critics. Their chief business at present is to save it from being a bad imitation of popular authors abroad;—they will do no harm by insisting upon originality.—It is some consolation to think, that a true poet will never consult critics to ascertain the extent or proper direction of his powers. It is enough, if he can learn from them his mistakes, their source and correction, and especially if he can find that he is surrounded by men who understand him thoroughly.—Nor will a true poet consult his readers too often;—he is more concerned with his thoughts than his success; and if he thinks of the subject at all, he will feel that to humour men is not the way to be permanently in favour with them. If there were any serious danger that the censures of critics or even public opinion might repress literary enterprise in a great mind, it would be time now to urge upon authors and readers the very wholesome remark of Bishop Hall;—'Certainly, look what weather it would be, if every almanac should be verified,—much what like poems, if every fancy should be suited.'